

Safety On The Road

Lay Down The Law For Kids In Cars

Parents and drivers must strictly enforce safety rules in the automobile.

Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death for children.

Correctly placed safety seats for babies, and safe seating arrangements and seat belts for older children can save their young lives and reduce the possibility of serious injuries in the event of a crash. Studies have shown children may be riding unrestrained 40 per cent of the time. In addition, many parents use safety restraints incorrectly or promote children from infant, convertible or booster seats too soon.

Parents and drivers must strictly enforce safety rules in the automobile. There should be no exceptions, even if children are restless:

- Everyone must buckle up before the car moves. Parents must set a good example by wearing their own seatbelts and harness. As the driver of the vehicle, you should insist that everyone buckle up before you agree to operate the vehicle.
- Parents should not allow their children to buckle their own child safety seats. Younger children may not be able to fasten it correctly and they may also think that it is OK to unbuckle the seat

while the car is moving. If you allow older children to buckle their seat, always check to see that it is done correctly.

- If the child unbuckles the harness, the driver should pull over and stop as soon as it is safe to do so. The message is that if the buckle is undone, the car isn't going anywhere.
- This car rule is also non-negotiable: Children under 12 ride in the back seat. Studies show youngsters are three times less likely to die in car crashes if they are in the back seat. In addition to the general dangers of riding in the front passenger seat, children and small adults have been killed when air bags deployed in low-speed crashes.
- Safety seats must be properly installed and used according to manufacturer's instructions. Also read your vehicle manual for instructions on safety seats. A mistake could cost an infant's life.
- Infant safety seats must be rear-facing until the baby reaches about 20 pounds and one year.

Whether it's a long trip across the country or a short trip to the grocery store, children must be correctly restrained in the vehicle to prevent tragedy.

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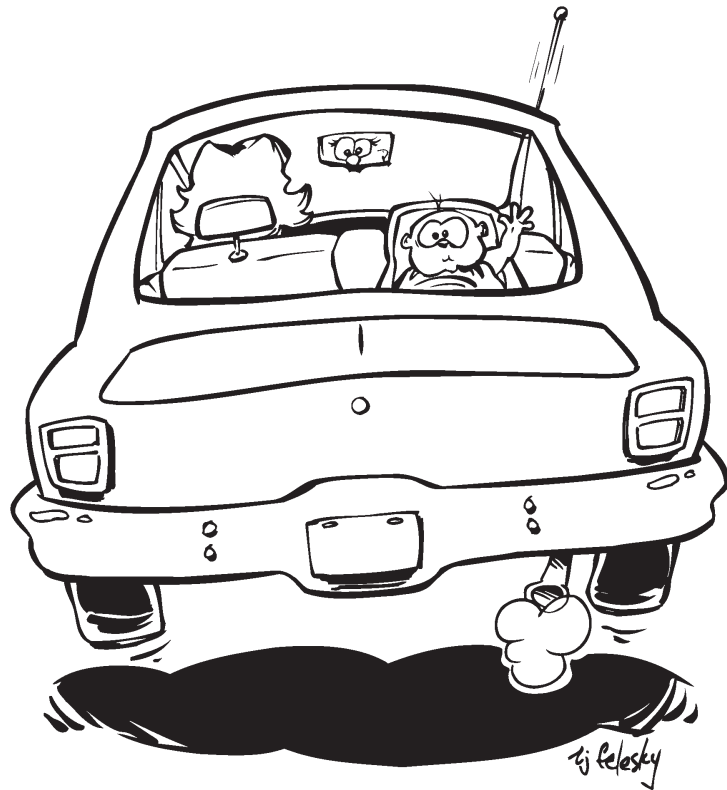
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